The University of Iowa
FACULTY COUNCIL MINUTES 2000-01
Tuesday, February 27, 2001
Penn State Room, Iowa Memorial Union 337

Members Present: Steven Aquilino, Jeff Cox, Vicki Grassian, Jean Jew, Debora Liddell, John Paul Long (Emeritus Council), Chuck Lynch, David Manderscheid, Ann Marie McCarthy, Gary Milavetz, John Moyers, Paul Muhly, Morton Pincus, Craig Porter, Margaret Raymond

Members Absent: Lois Geist

Members Excused: Caroline Carney Doebbeling, Gene Parkin

Faculty Senate Officers in Attendance: Carolyn Colvin, President; Amitava Bhattacharjee, Vice President; Teresa Mangum, Secretary; Jonathan Carlson, Ex-Officio President

Guests: Jim Andrews (Emeritus Faculty Council/AAUP), Lee Anna Clark (Office of the Provost), Bill Decker (Office of the Vice President for Research), Charles Drum (University Relations), Gary Engstrand (Staff to the Faculty Consultative Committee and Senate Consultative Committee, University of Minnesota), Beatrice Furner (Emeritus Faculty Council), Marti Gonzales (Vice Chair, Faculty Consultative Committee and Senate Consultative Committee, University of Minnesota), Joe Massey (Chair Elect, Faculty Consultative Committee and Senate Consultative Committee, University of Minnesota), Les Sims (Office of the Provost), Christopher Squier (Office of the Provost), Ruth Wachtel (Anesthesia/AAUP), Joyce Crawford (Faculty Senate/Office of the Provost)

I.   Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by President Colvin at 3:35 p.m.

II. Approvals

   A. Meeting Agenda

   Prof. Porter moved and Prof. McCarthy seconded the following motion.

   Motion: That the Faculty Council Agenda for February 27 be approved. *The motion carried.*

   B. Senate Minutes

Prof. Manderscheid moved and Prof. Porter seconded the following:

Motion: That the minutes for the Faculty Senate meeting of January 30, 2001 be approved. *The motion carried*.

C. The Minutes of the Faculty Council meeting held February 6, 2001 were approved by consensus.

III. Announcements

President Colvin introduced three visiting faculty governance leaders from the University of Minnesota: Mr. Gary Engstrand (Staff to the Faculty Consultative Committee and Senate Consultative Committee), Prof. Marti Gonzales (Vice Chair), and Prof. Joe Massey (Chair Elect).

President Colvin also reminded Councilors that they are invited by President Coleman to a reception at her home for the Faculty Senate to be held on Tuesday, April 3, 5:30-7:00.

Due to low enrollment, Mark Braun cancelled the Government Relations School on Friday.

IV. New Business

A. Policy change regarding Emeritus Status—presented by Prof. Beatrice Furner, Emeritus Faculty Council

The Emeritus Faculty Council has revisited the 1971 policy statement in the *Operations Manual,* Section 11.7 Emeritus Status for Retirees. Prof. Bea Furner attended the Faculty Council meeting as a representative of the Emeritus Faculty Council to describe proposed changes in the policy. She began by noting that since 1971 mandatory retirement has been abolished, the clinical track has been established, and part-time faculty positions have become somewhat more common.

The revised policy notes that "The status and title of Emeritus are not entitlements: rather they are conferred" and then outlines the conditions that would secure the title Emeritus for a retired faculty member. The Emeritus status would be automatically conferred on a regular faculty member, on a central administrator who holds faculty status, and on a library professional staff member who retires "after having served the University under honorable circumstances for a significant period of time." (The time specified is ten years.) "Permissive conferral of Emeritus status" would allow the Board of Regents to grant Emeritus status to a University president. It would also allow a Dean to seek the Provost's permission to confer Emeritus status in special circumstances to a faculty member who did not meet all the specified criteria. The document also explains how an

Emeritus faculty member would be titled (as last rank before retirement and as Emeritus or Emerita, based on personal choice, if the faculty member is a woman). The rank would then be recorded in the Register of Personnel Changes. Finally, the policy says that if a retired faculty member is not offered Emeritus status this is "not subject to review under the University's grievance procedures."

Councilors asked a number of questions about the terminology and assumptions in the new policy. Both Prof. Carlson and Prof. Pincus wished to know why ten years of continuous service should be a requirement? Prof. Furner replied that the Emeritus Council wanted to see evidence of a serious, long-term commitment to the University. When Prof. Lynch asked why library professional staff members are singled out as a distinct group, we learned that at many peer institutions, librarians are faculty members, though not at Iowa. Therefore, the Emeritus Council followed the 1971 document by including librarians. Prof. Jew asked for further clarification regarding the term "honorable retirement." Prof. Furner said that this phrase signaled that Emeritus status would not be conferred upon a faculty member who was dismissed under the cloud of a grievance. Others asked whether such denial would be extended to a person involved in a negotiated settlement leading to retirement? Prof. Furner explained that the Emeritus Council believes the "permissive conferral" clause sufficiently allows for special circumstances to be acknowledged. Prof. Carlson asked whether ambiguity might arise if a person decided to accept a grievance procedure rather than fight it? As long as the person resigns or negotiates an agreement, said Prof. Furner, the retirement would be considered honorable. Prof. Porter questioned whether permissive conferral should be an option when a faculty member's termination was not considered honorable. He also asked what privileges accompanied Emeritus status. This designation, explained Prof. Furner, entitles its holder to join the Emeritus Faculty Organization, to serve on the Emeritus Faculty Council, and to hold library privileges. Those faculty members who have secured a parking sticker before retiring may keep their stickers and park free. The Emeritus Council is currently creating a pamphlet to outline the privileges and responsibilities of Emeritus status.

Prof. Carlson moved and Prof. Grassian seconded the following motion:

Motion: That the Faculty Council will forward the revised Emeritus Status for Retirees Policy to the Senate for consideration. *The motion carried.*

B. Informatics Study Committee Report—presented by Prof. Bill Decker

In 1999, a number of proposals from different parts of the faculty community drew attention to the need for collaboration in the area of informatics. People from the biological sciences, physics, statistics, and computers, among other disciplines, initiated a grassroots discussion of their overlapping interests in informatics. When Provost Whitmore and the Vice President of Research Skorton

learned of these discussions, they formed a committee to coordinate plans and proposals across the campus. Bill Decker, Associate Vice President for Research, and Les Sims, Interim Vice Provost, were named co-chairs. The committee members are Michael Apicella (College of Medicine), Usha Balakrishnan (Office of the Vice President for Research), Tom Casavant (College of Engineering), Connie Delaney (College of Nursing), John Forys (University Libraries), Joe Kearney (College of Liberal Arts), Michael Kienzle (College of Medicine), Joyce L. Moore (College of Education), Jacob Odgaard (College of Engineering), Wayne Polyzou (College of Liberal Arts), Alberto Segre (College of Business), Padmini Srinivasan (College of Business), John Stokes (College of Medicine), and Veronica Viedland (College of Public Health). They delivered a report, "The University of Iowa Informatics Initiative: A Proposal for Enhancing the Informational and Computational Sciences and Their Application," to Provost Whitmore and Vice President Skorton on February 13, 2001.

One of the difficulties faced by the committee was establishing a definition for informatics. The term does not refer to computers and technology per se, but rather to the ways in which mathematical, computational, and information-exchange methods can enable technology to manage data in ways that enhance the delivery and interpretation of data. In addition, informatics can refer to collaborative efforts of researchers in core "informatic sciences" to facilitate the circulation and interpretation of data. In plain English, when scientists deal with such elaborate information as has been produced in the Human Genome project, they need ways to manage and represent the data in order to translate universes of detail into meaningful, understandable, and usable material.

Prof. Decker noted that the work of the committee is timely. A number of national funding organizations offer grants specifically designed to support interdisciplinary informatics research. More locally, one of the three key initiatives for the state of Iowa is the development of informatics. In addition, students increasingly find when they graduate and seek employment that they are expected to excel at "computational literacy."

Prof. Decker then reviewed the three goals and seven recommendations the committee offers in its report. The three goals are to

1.   Foster interdisciplinary interaction and collaboration in the application of information, computation, mathematical and statistical sciences to problems in a broad array of disciplines,
2.   Establish and maintain a critical mass of expertise in the applied informational and computational sciences, and
3.   Build and nurture an internationally competitive computational community and culture at the University of Iowa.

The seven recommendations are to

1.	Create an ongoing and identifiable position with responsibility for oversight, facilitation, and development of this initiative.
2.	Sponsor programs of interdisciplinarity and collaborative activities.
3.	Strengthen existing programs in the applied information, mathematical, and computational sciences (to build on existing programs, for example in computational math).
4.	Devise and facilitate general strategies for development of new programs of study and research in informatics-related fields (encouraging programs of study like computational biology and supporting new certificate programs such as health informatics and nursing informatics).
5.	Promote agility in the deployment of research and development efforts in response to emergent informatics-related opportunities (to avoid overhead from centers or institutes, the report encourages administrators instead to identify small informatics-related resource or education units and to support their activities).
6.	Promote basic information literacy and computational fluency standards for University of Iowa students.
7.	Contribute to and promote the evolution and support of infrastructure required to sustain an informatics initiative, including both its educational and research components.

For the complete report, see the Committee's website at

http://www.cs.uiowa.edu/~decker/documents/Report.PDF

The Provost and Vice President for Research have now asked the committee to provide specific examples for each recommendation. These examples will provide a basis for deciding what practical steps to take to achieve the goals outlined by the committee.

Though Councilors were themselves somewhat overwhelmed by this information, they nevertheless formulated a series of questions. Prof. Lynch began, asking where the funding will come from and who will lead the initiative? Will the Vice President for Research? Prof. Decker said this has not yet been determined. Vice Provost Sims offered the program that fosters faculty diversity as a possible model. A flexible pool permits funding of a new faculty member for one to three years to help departments diversify their faculties. In the same way, we might create a funding pool to allow two departments to hire a person with informatics skills to work in both departments. President Colvin asked how much a budget cut would affect this initiative--to which Prof. Decker replied that work around the idea of informatics will continue regardless. The report suggests ways to build cooperation and encourage activity whatever the level of funding.

Prof. Carlson expressed concern about attention to such an initiative when the budget is tight. Almost every point in the report requests more resources, which

means moving resources from other programs. In other words, many projects and needs at the University are very important but do not get this kind of attention. During stringent periods, on-going activities tend to be undervalued in the competitions for resources in contrast with an initiative like this. Prof. Decker demurred, arguing that we should not hold back on the recommendations. For him, the question is how *aggressively* can the University respond to the recommendations? Will we have to develop collaboration without additional resources? At least, he noted, the report offers a roadmap. Prof. Bhattacharjee pointed out that it is still a challenge to figure out how to do interdisciplinary work. He believes that many universities are ahead of Iowa in this respect, in the sciences especially, because they already have support for collaboration. He noted that a great deal of external funding is available for exactly these kinds of initiatives. Prof. Bhattacharjee also said that the recommendations seem too general. Vice Provost Sims explained that is why the committee has been asked to continue working together and to offer specific examples. He also commented that one problem the committee faced in drafting recommendations is that informatics touches so many disciplines that it is hard to make specific recommendations without excluding some programs. Prof. Grassian pointed out that this is an enhancement initiative, not a brand new project. As a final question, Prof. Cox turned to the recommendation aimed at establishing "computational literacy" standards. He asked whether the committee believes we should revise general education requirements or encourage high schools to expand their math programs? President Colvin thanked Prof. Decker for presenting the report to the Council.

C. Executive Session to Discuss the "Unfitness Policy"

President Colvin asked for a motion to go into executive session for further discussion of the "unfitness policy."

Prof. Muhly moved and Prof. Bhattarcharjee seconded the following motion:

Motion: That the Faculty Council will move into executive session to continue discussion of the Unfitness Policy. *The motion carried.*

Prof. Porter moved and Prof. Carlson seconded the following motion:

Motion: That the guests from the University of Minnesota governance organization are invited to remain for the executive session. *The motion carried.*

Prof. Carlson then moved and Prof. Lynch seconded the following motion:

Motion: That the members of the AAUP are invited to remain for the executive session. *The motion carried.*

Pres. Colvin began the executive session by distributing a fourth revision of the "unfitness" policy. The document shows the existing *Operations Manual*: III Human Resources. Section 29.8 Unfitness Policy in the left-hand column and the "Cox Committee Draft #4" in the right-hand column. She noted that the latest draft incorporates suggestions made by the AAUP. Since our last meeting, President Colvin and Prof. Cox have attended meetings of DEOs, of the Liberal Arts Assembly, and of the Provost's "Coffee and Conversation" hour to solicit responses to the proposed policy revisions. Those meetings have made clear that some faculty members perceive the "unfitness policy" as one facet of a national movement to abolish tenure. She has also encountered general anxiety that if the document is made clearer, it will also be easier to use against faculty members. Finally, she expressed concern that few faculty members seem to have read the existing or proposed versions of the policy before forming opinions about either. Both President Colvin and Prof. Cox now believe that a Senate committee may eventually need to draft an additional policy for the *Operations Manual* that covers non-consensual reallocation of duty.

Prof. Cox noted a number of changes in this most recent revision. The new document no longer includes a section on disabilities as part of the unfitness category. (However, the statement on termination related to disability remains a part of the rules in a separate section of the *Operations Manual*.) Though the proposal is now titled as Unacceptable Performance of Duty, the committee has reintroduced the word "unfitness" into the text. The document now includes the following definition: III. 29.8 A. 1. Scope: This section establishes procedures to be followed by the University in initiating and conducting proceedings against a faculty member whose performance of duty is alleged to fall substantially below standards for acceptable faculty performance for a significant period of time, *to such an extent that the person is unfit to serve on the faculty.*

President Colvin then charged the Council to consider one question. Are we content with the old policy? She asked Councilors to study both versions and to call meetings of their departments to work through the material, asking this same question: do they prefer the old policy or do they want a new policy? Once we have a sense of the general preference of faculty members, then we can move toward a vote on this question.

Prof. Bhattacharjee noted that some faculty members have asked why this new process focuses on unfitness when the point is to try to reform faculty who are not working effectively? He suggested that many Liberal Arts faculty members do not understand the policy, and out of that misunderstanding they want to leave the policy as it is.

Prof. Cox reminded Councilors that the new policy proposes a change of procedures, *not* an expansion of unfitness. Prof. Moyers observed that one reason

faculty feel threatened is that the document heavily emphasizes the role of the collegiate dean rather than a faculty group, such as the judicial commission. Others noted that one dean has already tried to implement this policy in the casual way some faculty members most fear it will be used. Prof. Muhly pointed out that all the existing policies for dismissal of a faculty member include a clause that allows an alternative to actual termination. But this policy seems to invite termination. Prof. Liddell suggested anyone who was to be charged with unfitness should be informed earlier than in the process than is currently specified in the new policy to avoid giving the appearance that a dean and consulting group are colluding against an individual. Prof. Lynch noted that many faculty members already lack confidence that the current process of evaluation is effective.

Prof. Wachtel of the AAUP observed that one problem with creating an "alternative conclusions" section is that if a person is truly deemed unfit, presumably that person should not be given any alternatives to termination. Prof. Muhly replied that the administration has a responsibility to identify unfit people, but as soon as the problem is noted, the dean should work with the consulting group to determine what the issues are and then let the DCG decide how best to respond. Only after the solutions attempted do not prove satisfactory should dismissal proceedings be initiated.

V. Adjournment

President Colvin adjourned the executive session at 5:30 p.m.

Next Council meeting: Tuesday, March 27, 2001 (Ohio State Room #343).

Respectfully submitted,
Teresa Mangum
Secretary